



MEMORANDUM OF RECORD

Shawn Etcher
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

October 31, 2012

Subject: Telephone Interview with pilot

Persons on Telephone call: Mr. Kevin Saltsman (pilot) and Shawn Etcher (self)

Time Telephone Call Began: 1523 EDT

The telephone interview began with asking Mr. Saltsman if everyone was doing okay. He stated that they were and that his wife had the most injuries which included a broken nose, black eyes, fifty-five (55) stitches in her face, and second (2nd) degree burns on her right hip and back. A couple of the children had bruises, scrapes, and bumps and that he had no injuries.

Mr. Saltsman was asked if he knew how his wife got burnt. He stated that the aircraft was on fire as they were exiting the airplane and that he was thankful that she was not burnt worse.

Mr. Saltsman was asked to describe all that he could recall before the accident upto and including exiting the airplane. Mr. Saltsman stated that they loaded up the airplane and their children had some trinkets that they purchased while in Gatlinburg; however, they were about 150 pounds under maximum gross weight. It was lightly raining when they were loading the airplane. He picked up his clearance and then taxied out to runway 28. They were number one (1) for departure and he notified Knoxville approach control of that and that they were ready for departure. After departure he notified the common traffic advisory and then contacted approach control. Approach control asked him to ident and shortly after stated "radar contact." Several minutes later the controller asked if he would like radar vectors to the DUBBS intersection or if he would like to proceed as filed. He stated radar vectors would be fine. The controller gave him a heading of 260 degrees. He then engaged the autopilot in heading mode; however, it turned beyond 260 degrees, he disengaged the autopilot and turned back to his heading. He was on a heading of 240 degrees for about fifteen (15) seconds prior to turning back to 260 degrees. He was not sure how long had passed he felt it was several minutes when his Garmin 430 GPS provided him with a terrain warning. He was in the clouds at the time and asked Approach control "do you see us to be ok?" He received no response and repeated the question. At which time the GPS provided him with an obstacle warning and him and his wife also heard something on the frequency but it sounded similar to "a mumble bunch of words." About the eleven (11) o'clock position he noticed a rooftop about 100 feet ahead of him and banked the airplane up and to the right in order to climb over the rooftop and the surrounding trees that were coming into view; however, the belly of the airplane impacted some trees prior to coming to rest. The airplane was on fire and he told his family to get out; however, the back door was unable to be opened. He was able to get his wife's door open and when she released her lapbelt she fell out of the airplane. They were unaware that they were inverted. He released his lapbelt held on to the yoke with his feet outside the door and assisted his children getting out. He estimated that he was about fifteen (15) feet in the air and helped lower his children towards the ground in hopes to minimize the

distance they had to jump. After the third child exited he fell to the ground and they got as far away as they could from the fire. They went to a nearby house to call for help and also to call the approach control facility.

Mr. Saltsman was asked if they had difficulty with radio reception. He stated they had good reception on the ground as well as in the air after departure and did not perceive any issues with the frequency or their radios.

Mr. Saltsman was asked if he could recall his clearance that he received on the ground. He stated he thought it was cleared as filed, fly runway heading to 5,000.

Mr. Saltsman was asked if he could recall his airspeed and/or his rate of climb during departure. He stated that does not recall the airspeed but would estimate it at 100 miles per hour and that his climb rate was about 400 feet per minute. He further stated that there was some turbulence and that at times he probably was climbing at a higher rate and at others a lower rate but 400 feet per minute was about the average climb rate.

Mr. Saltsman was asked if he was the owner of the airplane. He stated that he co-owned the airplane with another individual who was a mechanic.

Mr. Saltsman was asked if he knew where the logbooks were. He stated that they were probably in the hangar in Titusville; however, he has not been able to get into the hangar since the extra key was in his vehicle which was locked away in the hangar but he would go look when the airport personnel could let him in.

Mr. Saltsman was informed of the NTSB 6120 form and was asked how he would like me to send it to him. He stated via email would be fine and provided the IIC with his email address.

Mr. Saltsman was then asked to have each of his family members write down a statement and send it with the 6120 form in order so we do not have to make the children re-live the accident. He stated he will do that.

Mr. Saltsman was asked if the above information was correct as to the best he could recall. He stated it was.

Mr. Saltsman was then asked if he had any questions. He stated he would like to go fly soon, like getting back on a bike after you fall off; however, he was not sure of the status of his pilot certificate. He stated that the FAA informed him that he would be receiving a letter and probably will be required to be reevaluated. **Mr. Saltsman was informed that the FAA would be the ones to ask about that and that the NTSB does not have jurisdiction over certificates but that if he would contact the FAA inspector he would be able to inform him of his status.** Mr. Saltsman stated that he would do that and that he had no further questions at this time.

Mr. Saltsman also stated that he had contacted the approach facility on October 30th for two reasons. One was to check on the controller to make sure he was doing okay and the other was to request a copy of the audio tape. He was informed by an individual at the facility of the Freedom Of Information Act and directed to the website for the appropriate paperwork and that the controller was fine.

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